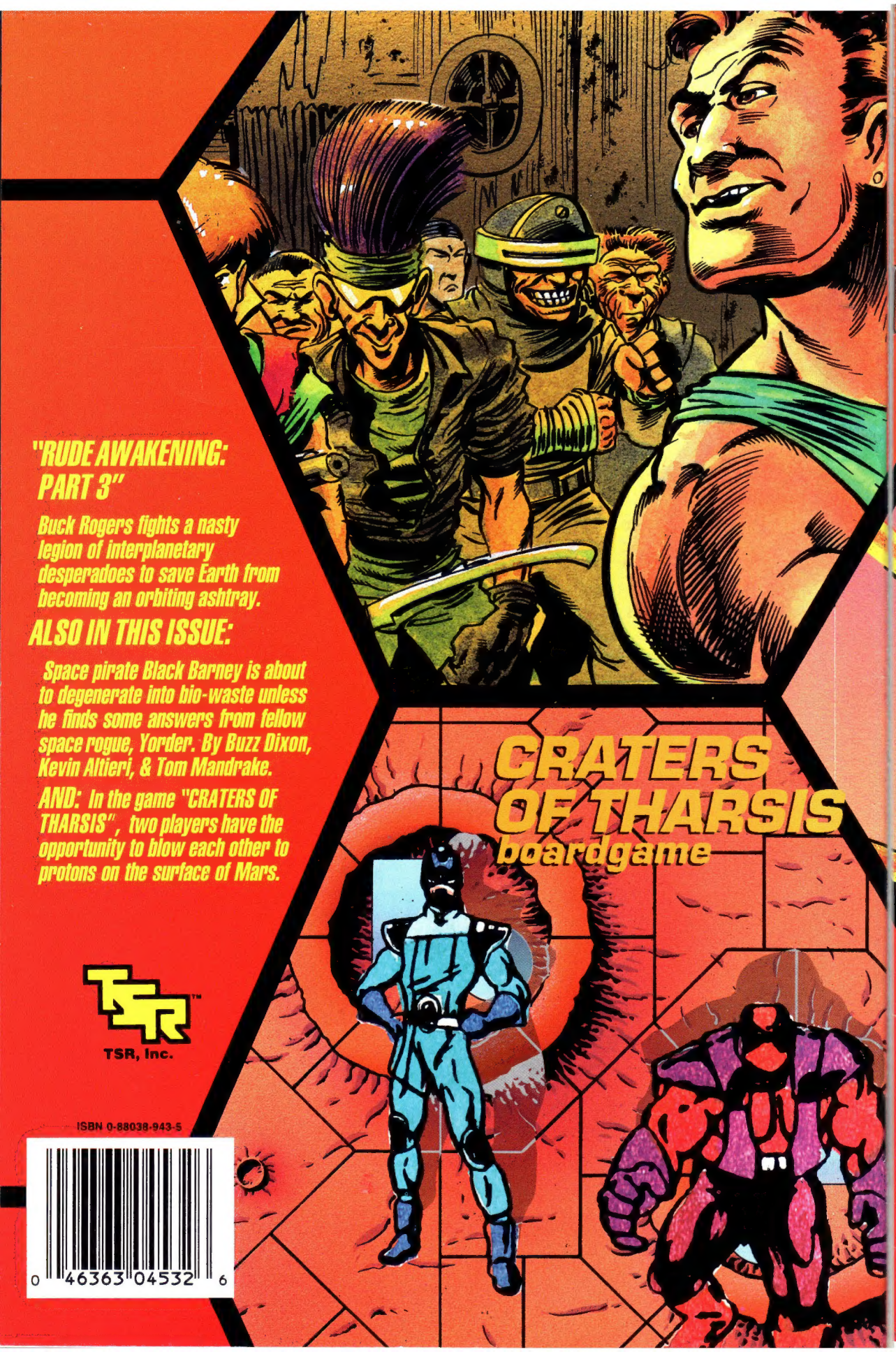

"RUDE AWAKENING: PART 3"

Buck Rogers fights a nasty legion of interplanetary desperadoes to save Earth from becoming an orbiting ashtray.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Space pirate Black Barney is about to degenerate into bio-waste unless he finds some answers from fellow space rogue, Yorder. By Buzz Dixon, Kevin Altieri, & Tom Mandrake.

AND: In the game "CRATERS OF THARSIS", two players have the opportunity to blow each other to protons on the surface of Mars.

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THE ORIGINAL SPACE HERO

BUCK ROGERS®
XXVC
THE 25TH CENTURY™

FLINT DILLE,
BUZZ DIXON
& FRANK CIROCCO

BUCK ROGERS DIED SO
MANKIND COULD LIVE
19?? - 1??4

BUCK ROGERS®

XXVC

THE 25TH CENTURY

CRATERS OF THARSIS®

DIRTY BUSINESS
BE GENTLE WITH HIM, BOYS. HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MUCH, BUT HE'S WORTH A LOT OF AH—BUCKS—TO—
—CERTAIN CONCERNS!
"BUCKS"?

IT ALL BEGAN WHEN I HEARD A RUMOR THAT SOME LONG-ON-THE-BRAINS, SHORT-ON-THE-SENSE PROFESSOR HAD A THEORY THAT THE BODY OF ANCIENT ASTRONAUT BUCK ROGERS WAS FLOATING AROUND THE ASTEROID BELT.
"HE THOUGHT ALL HE HAD WAS AN ASTROARCHEOLOGICAL ARTIFACT ON HIS HANDS. HE DIDN'T KNOW THAT ROGERS WAS A POLITICAL HOT POTATO—
"THAT EVERYBODY FROM WILMA DEERING OF EARTH--
"--TO THE CORPORATE OVERLORDS OF MARS--
"--TO KILLER KANE AND ARDALA--
"--WOULD BE CHASING ROGERS HALF WAY ACROSS SPACE.
"THEN, BUCK CAME BACK TO LIFE AND TOOK THINGS INTO HIS OWN HANDS.
"WHICH CAUSED HIM TO FALL RIGHT INTO MINE--
"--AND AS I STARTED TO SAY-- --A BUCK IN THE HANDS IS WORTH MILLIONS IN THE BANK."

OH, THE CAPTAIN IS A FATHER TO HIS CREW!
YADA-BOOM!
OH, THE CAPTAIN IS A FATHER TO HIS CREW!
YADA-BOOM!
OH, GREAT. BELTERS.
MAN, I HATE BELTERS.
AREN'T WE THE MERRY CREW?
SOUP
LET'S SEE YOUR PAPERS.
TAPPETA-TAPPETA TAPPETA
I GOT PAPERS. THE COLLECTED EUPHEMISMS OF FLINT DILLE.
LET'S STUDY THEM ALONE TOGETHER.
YOU... DISGUSTING...
GET-OFF-MY-WORLD!
DON'T-- EVER-- LET ME CATCH YOU...
YOU'RE A MERCIFUL ANGEL, MISSY.
A SPACER'S DREAM COME TRUE...

ARDALA ALERTED US TOO LATE.
SMIRNOFF...
ARE YOU TELLING ME...
SOMEHOW BUCK ROGERS IS NO LONGER ON MARS.
...THAT A FIVE-HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD PRIMITIVE...
...SIMPLY WALKS OFF A PLANET?!!!
PERHAPS MY NEO INFORMANT--
STOP HIM! NOW! IT TAKES NO GENIUS TO REALIZE HE'S HEADING FOR EARTH.
DON'T FAIL ME AGAIN, SMIRNOFF.
PERHAPS?!! SMIRNOFF!
WHATEVER IT TAKES.
DESTROY BUCK ROGERS!
HOLY--!
WHERE...?

ROGERS. WELCOME ABOARD THE FREE ENTERPRISE.
CATCHY NAME.
MIND TELLING ME WHO YOU ARE AND WHERE WE'RE GOING?

WATCH THE TONE.
THE NAME'S BARNEY. BLACK BARNEY. I'M AN... ENTREPRENEUR.
BY THE WAY, LET'S HAVE THE TEACH-TOY.

WE DON'T WANT RAM TRACKING YOU BY IT.

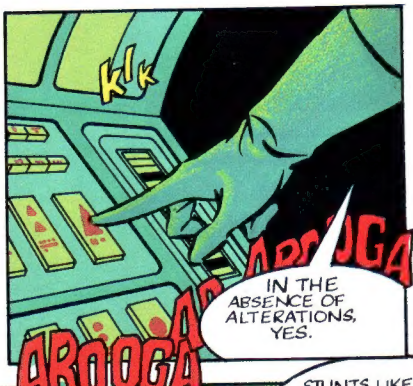
AS I WAS SAYING, YOU'RE A VALUABLE MAN.
I COULD GET USED TO SELLING YOU.

SO I'M A PRISONER.
YOU SHOULD HAVE TAKEN MY GUN.
YEAH, I BET IT WOWS 'EM AT THE OLD FOLKS' HOME.

FRANKLY, IT'S NOT IN OUR LEAGUE. HERE. ALL HALF-DUPLEX.
DATA COMES IN, BUT IT WON'T GO OUT.
YOU'VE GOT THE RUN OF THE SHIP, ROGERS. DON'T ABUSE IT.

DOC?
HUER. DOC RESPONDING TO INPUT.
SHHH.
KNOW HOW TO FLY A SPACESHIP?
WITH MY ACCESS-FEEDBACK CIRCUIT DISENGAGED, I CAN RELAY ALL INFORMATION IN RAM MAINFRAMES.
KEEP IT DOWN.
HOW DO I RUN THIS SHIP?

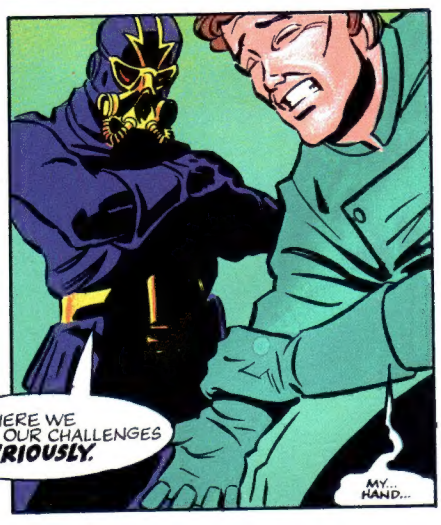
STANDARD ISSUE MERCHANT CRAFT.
THE ORBITAL VECTOR SWITCH GOVERNS RELATIVE POSITION IN SPACE.
THAT'S IT?!


klk
AROOGA
IN THE ABSENCE OF ALTERATIONS, YES.

YOU'RE A SURPRISE, ROGERS. HERE I THOUGHT I WAS GIVING A PACIFIER TO A BABY.
AROOGA
AROOGA
STUNTS LIKE THAT PASSED FOR BRAINS IN THE 20th CENTURY?
TAKE HIM, BOYS.
AROOGA

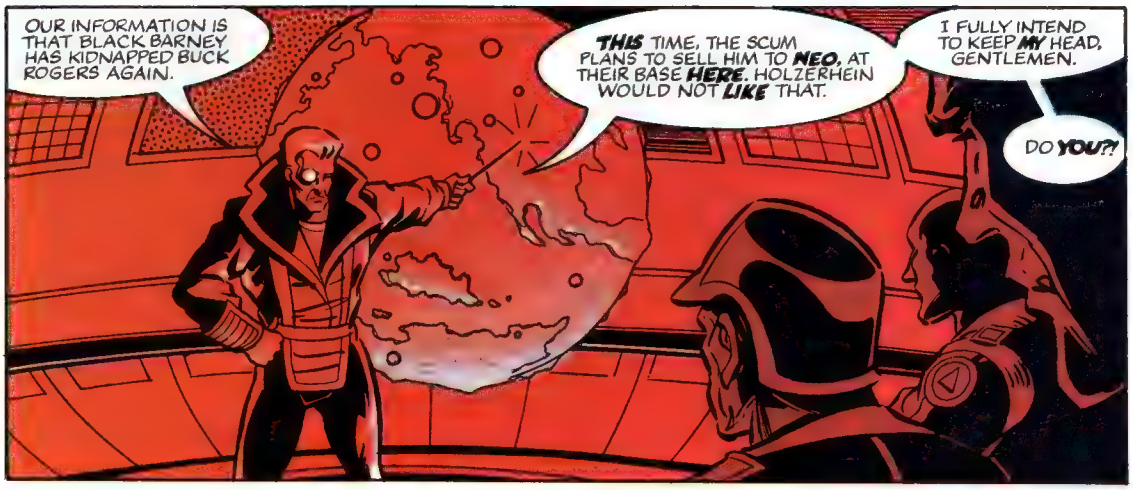
DO IT YOURSELF, TOUGH GUY.
AROOGA
I'VE HAD IT WITH YOU!

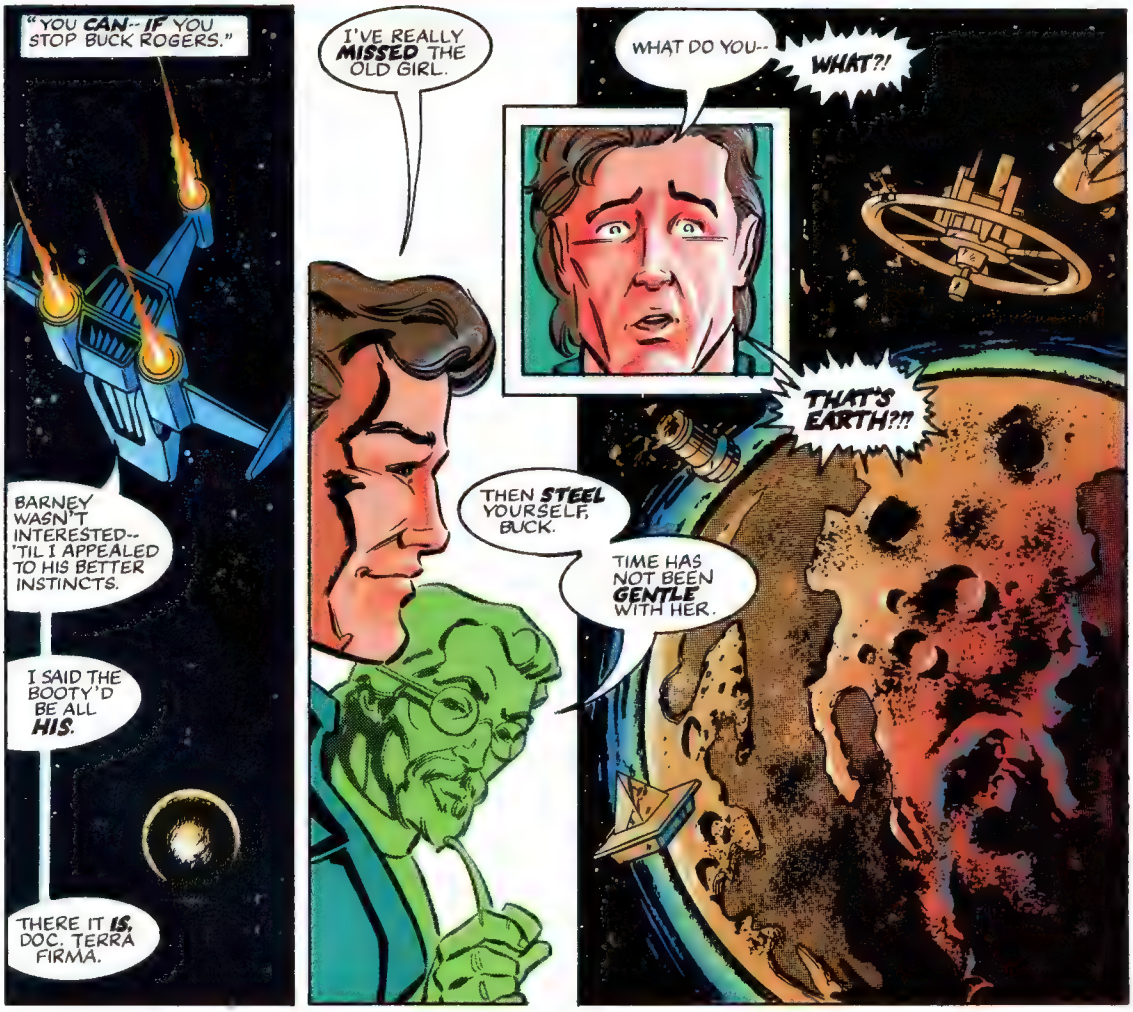
THAT SOUNDS LIKE A CHALLENGE
WOMP


UP HERE WE TAKE OUR CHALLENGES SERIOUSLY.
MY... HAND...

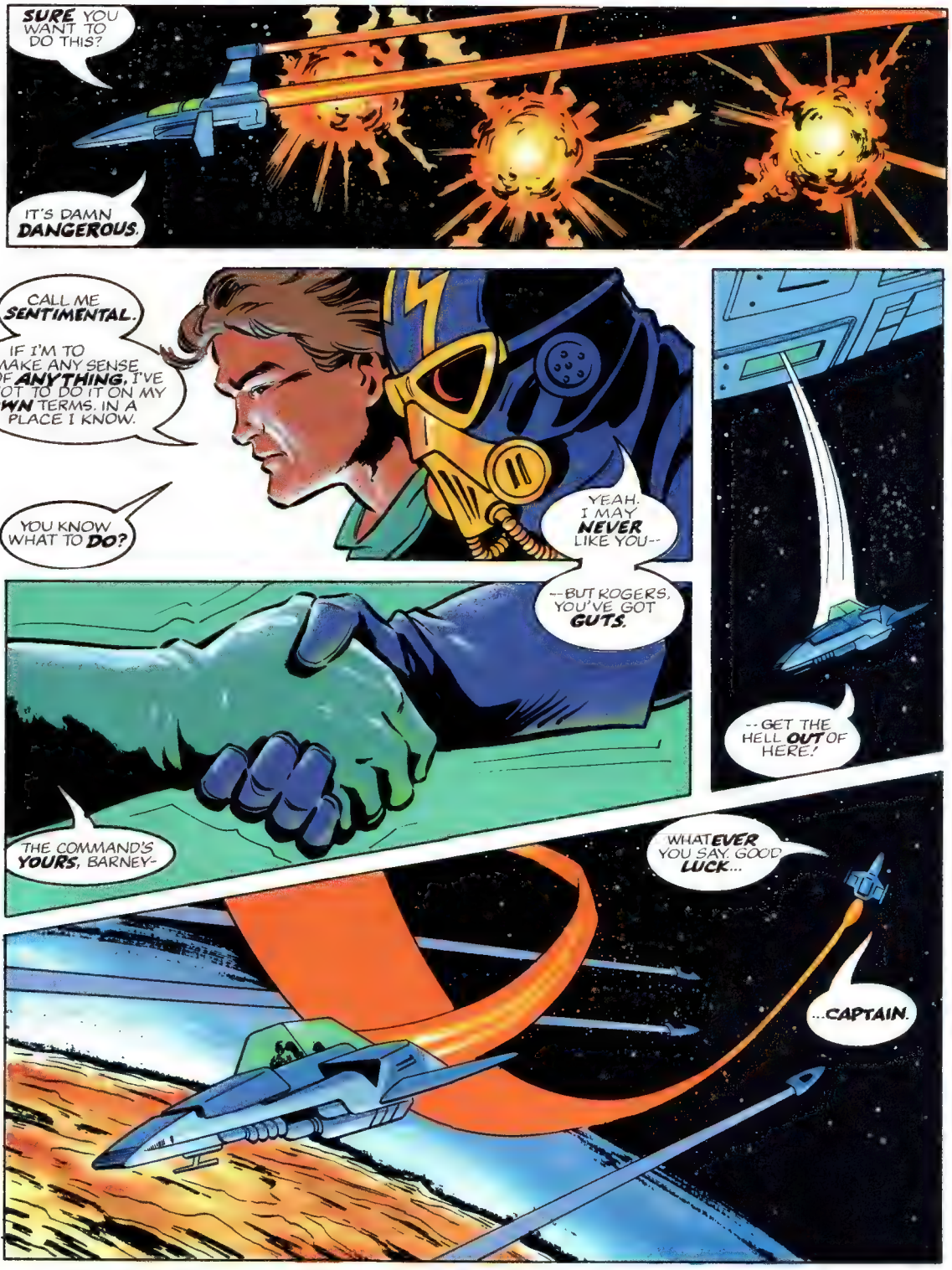
LET'S DO IT!
SMEK!
I WAS GOING TO SEDATE YOU, ROGERS.
BUT IT IS MORE FUN...
WUMP! WUMP! WUMP!
TO POUND YOU INTO OBLIVION.
OOH. THE ANTIQUE AGAIN.
THAT'S IT, GRANDDAD.
IMPRESS ME SOME MORRRRRRRRR-*
BLAM!

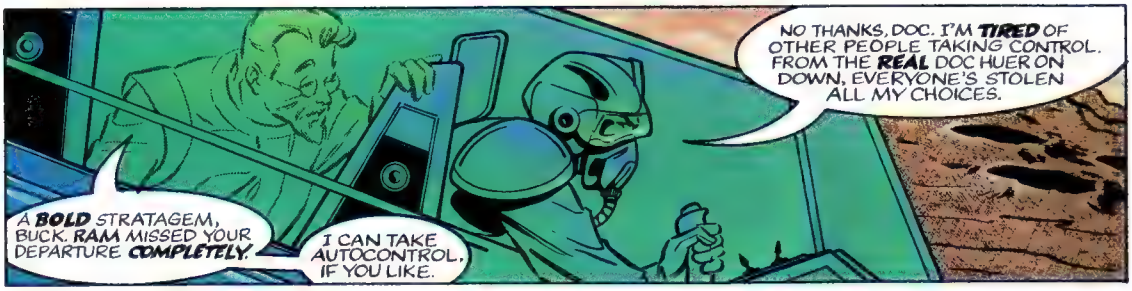
HE DOWNED BLACK BARNEY!
HAD TO HAPPEN SOMETIME.
KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS, ROGERS?
GET BACK!
DON'T MAKE ME SAY IT TWICE.
REALLY THINK YOU COULD FIGHT OFF 100 MEN?
EVEN YOU'RE NOT THAT STUPID.
BUT LUCKY? LUCKY YOU ARE!
SHLUPT
A BULLET. HA! NOBODY USES BULLETS.
GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GET USED TO YOUR STYLE... CAPTAIN.
CAPTAIN?
THE MAN WHO BEATS THE CAPTAIN BECOMES CAPTAIN. THE CODE OF ROGUES' GUILD.
SHALL WE CHUCK THE LOSER OUT AN AIRLOCK?
WHY ISN'T HE DEAD ALREADY?
BORG, SIR. TITANALLOY SKELETON.
THEY GOT NO BORGS WHERE YOU COME FROM?!
CYBORG, HUH? COULD BE HANDY.
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE OUT OF A JOB, BARNEY.
WANT ONE?

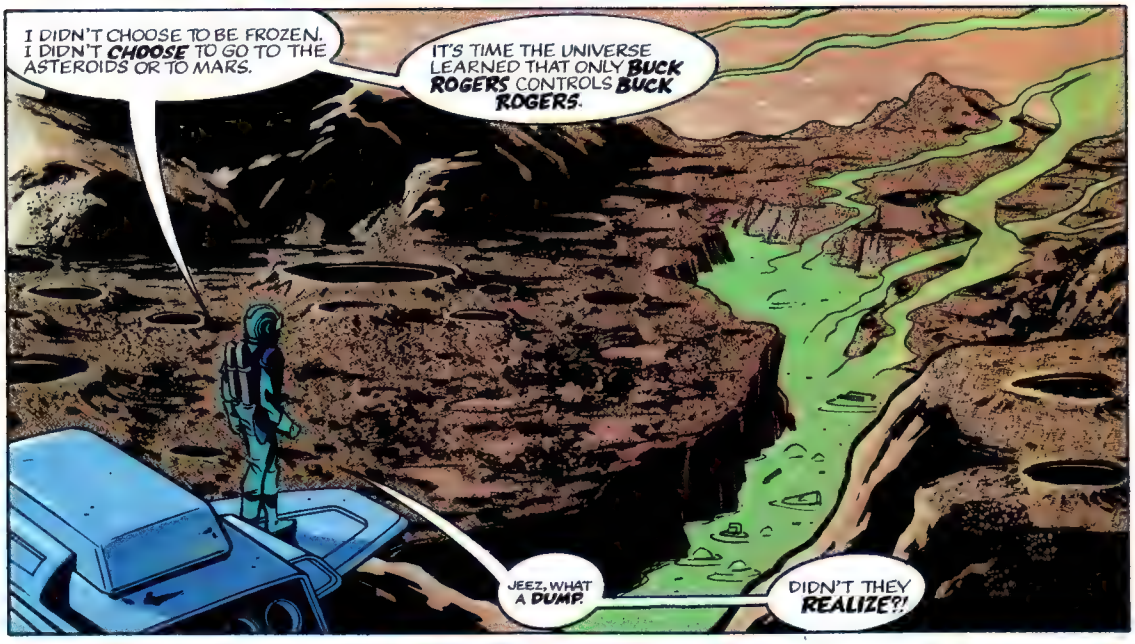

OUR INFORMATION IS THAT BLACK BARNEY HAS KIDNAPPED BUCK ROGERS AGAIN.
THIS TIME, THE SCUM PLANS TO SELL HIM TO NEO, AT THEIR BASE HERE. HOLZERHEIN WOULD NOT LIKE THAT.
I FULLY INTEND TO KEEP MY HEAD, GENTLEMEN.
DO YOU?!

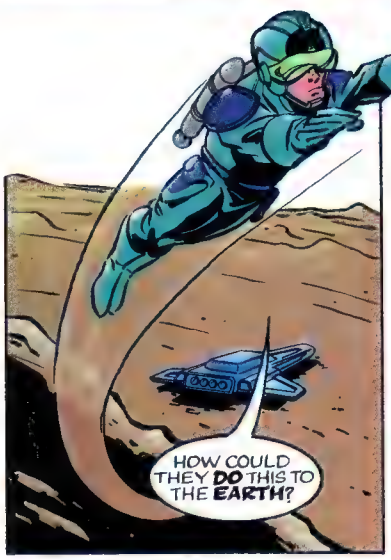

"YOU CAN-- IF YOU STOP BUCK ROGERS."
BARNEY WASN'T INTERESTED-- 'TIL I APPEALED TO HIS BETTER INSTINCTS.
I SAID THE BOOTY'D BE ALL HIS.
THERE IT IS, DOC. TERRA FIRMA.
I'VE REALLY MISSED THE OLD GIRL.
THEN STEEL YOURSELF, BUCK.
TIME HAS NOT BEEN GENTLE WITH HER.
WHAT DO YOU--
WHAT?!
THAT'S EARTH?!!

ALL UNITS, INTERCEPT AND DESTROY ROGUE SHIP FREE ENTERPRISE.
IT'S DUST, WAITING TO BE BLOWN AWAY.
THAT'S NO SHIP, COMMANDER.
BARNEY HERE, CAPTAIN. RAM FIGHTERS ON THE ATTACK.
ORDERS?
FOOD FOR THOUGHT, DOC.
WE'RE LEAVING?!
INTERESTING. THIS SHIP ANTI-SCANS.
YET THEY KNEW WHERE WE ARE.
BARNEY! CHANGE COURSE!
NOT A CHANCE, EARTH, HERE I COME.
GET NEO ON THE PHONE.
"PHONE?"
NEO H.Q., DEERING SP--
YOU?!
YOU CAN'T- KLK
YEAH, ME. THE DEAL'S OFF.
I'LL SEE NEO WHEN I CAN.
BARNEY, SET COURSE FOR THE COORDINATES DOC HUER'S GIVING YOU.
NOW!

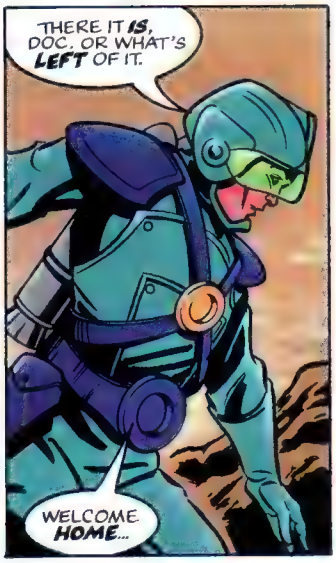

SURE YOU WANT TO DO THIS?
IT'S DAMN DANGEROUS.
CALL ME SENTIMENTAL.
IF I'M TO MAKE ANY SENSE OF ANYTHING, I'VE GOT TO DO IT ON MY OWN TERMS. IN A PLACE I KNOW.
YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?
YEAH. I MAY NEVER LIKE YOU--
--BUT ROGERS, YOU'VE GOT GUTS.
--GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!
THE COMMAND'S YOURS, BARNEY-
WHATEVER YOU SAY. GOOD LUCK...
...CAPTAIN.

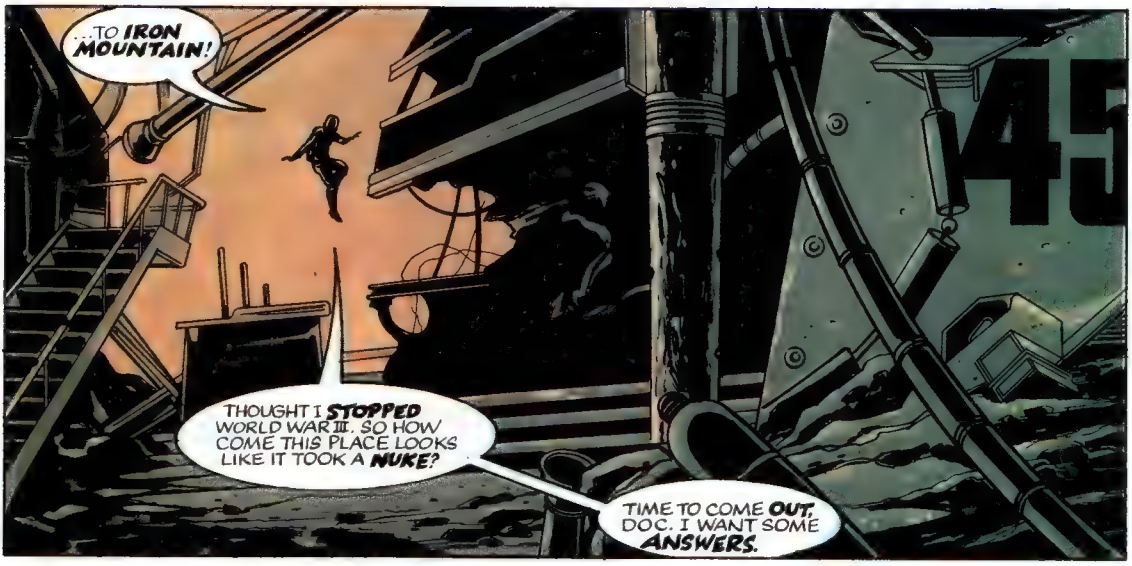

NO THANKS, DOC. I'M TIRED OF OTHER PEOPLE TAKING CONTROL. FROM THE REAL DOC HUER ON DOWN, EVERYONE'S STOLEN ALL MY CHOICES.
A BOLD STRATAGEM, BUCK. RAM MISSED YOUR DEPARTURE COMPLETELY.
I CAN TAKE AUTOCONTROL, IF YOU LIKE.


I DIDN'T CHOOSE TO BE FROZEN. I DIDN'T CHOOSE TO GO TO THE ASTEROIDS OR TO MARS.
IT'S TIME THE UNIVERSE LEARNED THAT ONLY BUCK ROGERS CONTROLS BUCK ROGERS.
JEEZ, WHAT A DUMP.
DIDN'T THEY REALIZE?!

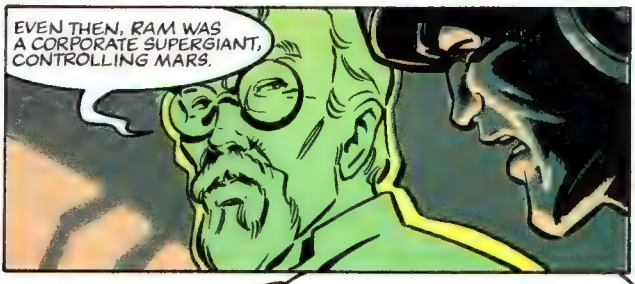

HOW COULD THEY DO THIS TO THE EARTH?

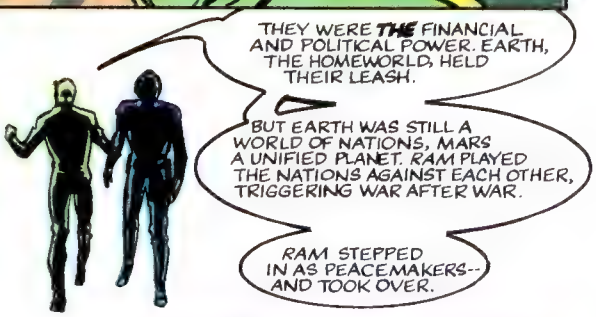
ROGERS MADE IT, YOU IDIOTS!
DEPLOY TERRINES! WIPE HIM OUT AND ALL HIS ALLIES!


THERE IT IS, DOC. OR WHAT'S LEFT OF IT.
WELCOME HOME...


...TO IRON MOUNTAIN!
45
THOUGHT I STOPPED WORLD WAR III. SO HOW COME THIS PLACE LOOKS LIKE IT TOOK A NUKE?
TIME TO COME OUT, DOC. I WANT SOME ANSWERS.

YOUR SACRIFICE BROUGHT VIRTUAL PEACE TO THE WORLD, BUCK-- FOR THREE CENTURIES.
IRON MOUNTAIN WAS A CASUALTY OF THE RAM WARS, 2210-2222.
RAM WARS? TELL ME MORE.


EVEN THEN, RAM WAS A CORPORATE SUPERGIANT, CONTROLLING MARS.


THEY WERE THE FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL POWER. EARTH, THE HOMEWORLD, HELD THEIR LEASH.
BUT EARTH WAS STILL A WORLD OF NATIONS, MARS A UNIFIED PLANET. RAM PLAYED THE NATIONS AGAINST EACH OTHER, TRIGGERING WAR AFTER WAR.
RAM STEPPED IN AS PEACEMAKERS-- AND TOOK OVER.

THEY GUTTED ITS RESOURCES...
AND TURNED IT INTO A TOXIC WASTE DUMP. I GOT IT.

WILMA! SHUTTLE LANDED VIRTUALLY IN OUR BACKYARD. NO I.D.
ROGERS?
LET'S HOPE. WHERE?
WYOMING. HEADING WEST BY JET PACK.
OLD BATTLESITE OUT THERE...
IRON MOUNTAIN!
HE FLEW HIS LAST MISSION OUT OF THERE. OF ALL THE OBVIOUS PLACES!
IF RAM CROSSREFERENCES HIS BIOGRAPHY...
"...LET'S HOPE THEY'RE STILL LOOKING FOR HIM IN SPACE!"
SO WAS IT WORTH IT, HERO?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD HAVE LET THE EARTH DIE QUICKLY... INSTEAD OF THIS..
THERE HE IS!
NO. IT'S DAMAGED, BUT IT'S STILL EARTH IT'S STILL MY BUCK!

DON'T PANIC, COLONEL. IT'S ME -- WILMA DEERING. THESE ARE THE NEO REBELS.
WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE.
I'LL DECIDE THAT, THANKS.
I WISH YOU COULD HAVE THAT LUXURY, COLONEL.
ATTENTION! THIS AREA IS UNDER RAM CONTROL. STAY WHERE YOU ARE.
TERRINES!
THEY WEREN'T SUPPOSED--!
SCATTER! DEFENSIVE POSITIONS!

FINALLY CHOOSE A SIDE, ROGERS?
WE'LL SEE. WHEN DO WE FIGHT?
WE DON'T.

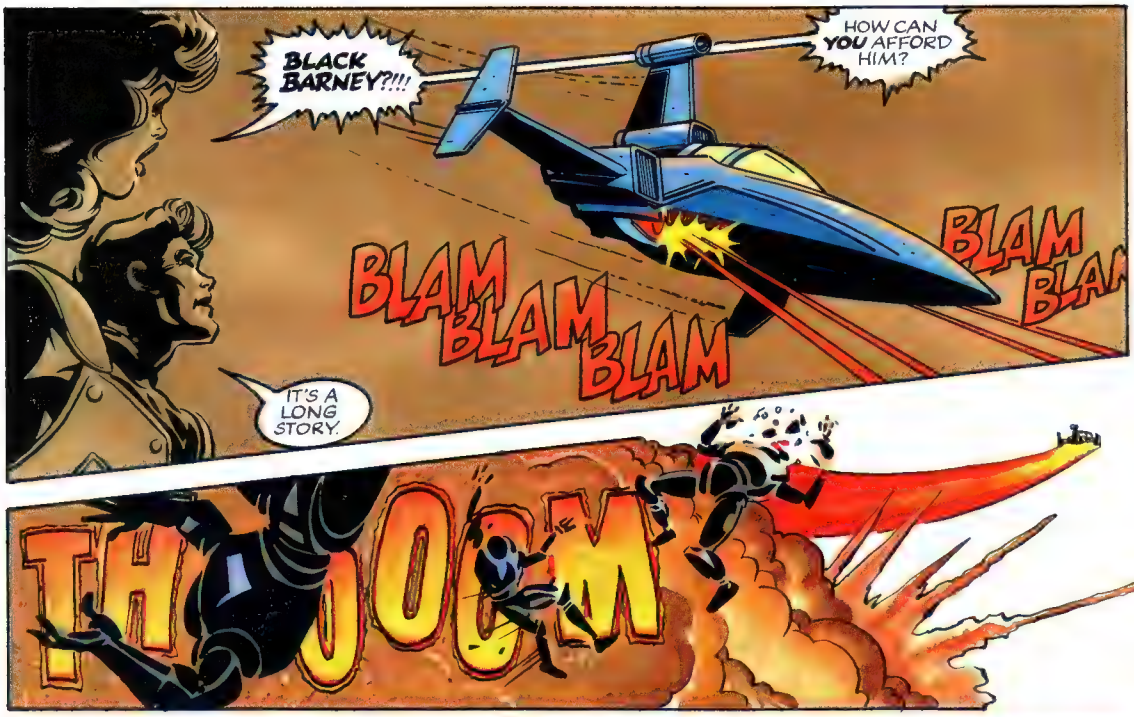
THAT'S WHAT THE RANK-AND-FILE ARE FOR.
OUR JOB IS TO GET YOU TO SAFETY

NO! WHY SHOULD THEY BE SLAUGHTERED FOR ME? WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT ME?
YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW, DO YOU?
YOU'RE NEO'S SYMBOL -- OF A FREE, PROUD, LIVING EARTH. LIKE THINGS USED TO BE. IF YOU DIE... OR RAM BUYS YOU...
WILMA. IT'S TOO QUIET.

I KNOW. I'M GOING BACK. HE'S IN YOUR HANDS, COE.
AND THE WORLD'S IN HIS HANDS.
WILMA!
THAT'S ENOUGH, ROGERS.
LET'S HAVE THE GUN.
OR WHAT? YOU'LL SHOOT?
PUT A CRIMP IN THE REVOLUTION, WON'T IT?
THERE ARE...OTHER CONSIDERATIONS...
YEAH, I BET.

YOU WEREN'T AT ALL SURPRISED THAT RAM WAS HERE -- JUST THAT THEY WERE TERRINES.
SOMEONE TOLD RAM I WAS HEADING TO EARTH.
THEY WERE WAITING FOR US! THEY KNEW WHERE TO FIND ME PLANETSIDE!
YOU'RE WRONG
WAK!
MAYBE.
I'M SURE NEO WILL WANT TO DISCUSS IT LATER.

JORGE?
SIMPSON?
ANYBODY LEFT?
AKK!
ATTENTION!
THIS AREA IS UNDER RAM CONTROL! STAY WHERE YOU ARE!
YEAH, YEAH...
WE'VE HEARD IT.
DON'T KNOW HOW YOU STAND THESE SILENT RIFLES.
I LIKE A WEAPON WITH SOME NOISE TO IT.
WHY AREN'T YOU WITH KANE?
HE'S A TRAITOR.
I... DON'T BELIEVE YOU.
HE'S A WAR HERO...
FINE. IT'S YOUR WAR.
LOOKS LIKE MY RIDE'S HERE.
BLAM
BLAM


BLACK BARNEY?!!!
HOW CAN YOU AFFORD HIM?
BLAM BLAM BLAM
BLAM BLA
IT'S A LONG STORY.
THOOOM

NOW THAT'S HOW WEAPONS SOUND.

YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT NEO, CAPTAIN.
CAPTAIN?
THEY'RE CLOSING IN ON US IN SPACE, RIGHT?

THEN THERE'S THIS TRANSMISSION FROM NEO-- WE PICKED IT UP--
--AND THE RAM SHIPS TAKE OFF IN A SHOT-- FOR HERE.

WHO KNEW WHERE I WAS, WILMA? WHO MIGHT HAVE HAD TIME TO SEND A MESSAGE?
NO ONE! WE HEADED OUT AS SOON AS...
...AS SOON AS...AS COE BROUGHT ME YOUR LOCATION...
THAT DOESN'T PROVE ANYTHING. KANE ISN'T A TRAITOR!

MAYBE IF YOU HEAR IT FROM--
GONE! I KNEW I DIDN'T HIT HIM HARD ENOUGH.
HE'S TOUGH!
BUT WHY WOULD HE RUN? UNLESS...?
NO! IT CAN'T BE!
IF COE CAN BE BOUGHT-- DAMN IT, HOW DOES RAM BUY EVERYTHING?
EVEN COE...
WHAT CHANCE... WHAT CHANCE DO THE REST OF US HAVE?
DAMN IT ALL--
THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE, WILMA.
I KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ANYONE.
I STILL CAN'T BE SURE WHAT'S GOING ON IN THIS NEW WORLD. I BARELY KNOW THE PLAYERS.
I'M NOT EVEN SURE WHO'S RIGHT.
BUT I'M SURE OF ONE THING.
THE EARTH IS MY HOME, AND I DON'T LIKE WHAT'S BEEN DONE TO IT. I WANT EVERYONE TO KNOW IT.
THEY'RE GOING TO KNOW BUCK ROGERS IS BACK-- WHETHER THEY LIKE IT OR NOT.
I'M YOUR CHANCE, WILMA. ME.
RIGHT OR WRONG, I STAND WITH EARTH.

FOR PLAY ON YOUR COMPUTER!

THE 25TH CENTURY

BUCK ROGERS™

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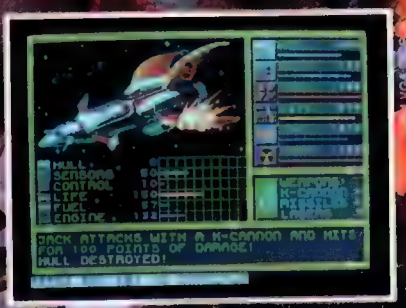

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SSI

STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS, INC.

CRATERS OF THARSIS

A BUCK ROGERS® BOARDGAME

BY MIKE PONDSMITH & PAUL A. LIDBERG

Introduction

In a previous encounter, NEO managed to hijack some of RAM's new, highly advanced Krait fighters. Impressed with the Krait's superior fighting abilities, and desperate for new hardware, the freedom fighters have decided to stage a daring raid on a secret RAM spaceport and steal an entire Krait squadron!

The RAM installation is based on the top of the forbidding Tharsian Plateau, a grim, cratered landscape untouched by the terraforming that graces much of the rest of 25th century Mars. Three great fortresses have been built into the craters of the Plateau, ringed with heavy laser cannon, traps, and guard patrols. NEO must somehow sneak into each of the craters, capture the Krait fighters, and escape by flying them out of the fortress before RAM can stop them. It's a tall order, even for Buck Rogers and his elite NEO warriors! Can they do it?

Craters of Tharsis is a boardgame for two players based on "Hammer of Mars," the second book of the Martian Wars trilogy, published by TSR. In this game one player plays the NEO freedom fighters, and the other plays the omnipresent RAM. Do you have what it takes? Only time will tell!

Set Up

Before the individual players set up, the RAM player places one Laser Cannon counter in each space around the rings of each of the craters. Then the RAM player places the Krait fighters inside any of the craters, in any combination the player wishes.

After the above is completed, each side rolls one die to determine who sets up first. The player with the highest roll can elect to place first or last. The player going first places three pieces on the board, one piece per space. Then the other player places three pieces on the board. This goes back and forth until all pieces are placed. Pieces include traps, troops, battlecarriers, fighters, cruisers, and laser cannons.

The RAM player has to remember that there needs to be at least one Terrine in each of the craters to operate the Laser Cannons. If there aren't any, the Cannons cannot fire that turn. RAM pieces may also be placed in the areas containing the Outer Crater walls, but no farther out.

The inside of the craters is considered to be one space, with the rectangular space(s) and the circle being part of that space. For convenience sake, any fighters are placed in the circle, (the launch pad), and the other pieces are placed in the rectangle(s).

There is a limit of 3 pieces, from each side, in any space on the board. During set up, pieces from opposing sides cannot be placed in the same space.

The NEO player can set up anywhere on the map except any of the actual crater spaces.

The Game Pieces

The Craters of Tharsis includes a selection of playing pieces. They are assembled by folding along the lines to create a triangular shape, then taping or pasting. The pieces are as follows.

NEO
12 WARRIORS
3 BATTLECARRIERS
2 KRAIT FIGHTERS
2 CRUISERS

RAM
8 TERRINES
3 BATTLECARRIERS
4 KRAIT FIGHTERS
3 CRUISERS
3 TRAPS
24 LASER CANNONS

The Dice

This game requires at least one ten sided die. These are available from your local game/comic store, probably even the store you bought this comics module from. If you do not have such a die available, we have provided counters marked 1 through 10. Cut these out and place them in a hat. Each time you are asked to roll a ten sided die, pull one of the chits. This is the result of your roll. If you are asked to roll several dice, pull chits from the hat one at a time, equal to the number of dice needed. Be sure to pull each one separately (returning the chit after each draw), or it will mess up the results.

"NEO Warriors: These are elite freedom fighters, armed with special stealth combat suits and laser carbines."

The Pieces

The pieces represent the various units used in this game. Each type is explained below:

NEO Warriors: These are elite freedom fighters, armed with special stealth combat suits and laser carbines. They are more accurate with laser attacks than their RAM opponents. They are also occasionally referred to as troops.

RAM Terrines: These are heavy assault troops. Less accurate with laser fire than their NEO opponents, they excel in hand-to-hand combat (adding +1 to all attack rolls when in hand-to-hand).

Battlecarriers: These are tank-like craft designed to fly through space and land assault troops on the ground. Each battlecarrier is armed with a laser and can carry three troops. They are slower than Cruisers and Fighters, but faster than Warriors and Terrines.

Krait Fighters: These are very fast, maneuverable spaceships armed with lasers and advanced stealth capabilities.

Cruisers: These are larger, slower spaceships armed with both lasers and bombs. This allows them to make two kinds of attacks instead of one. Cruisers may also be used to transport up to two troops at a time.

Traps: These counters have two sides, one showing the trap itself, the other showing how powerful the trap is. Traps may not be placed in Craters.

Laser Cannons: The Laser Cannon counters represent a useable cannon. When a laser cannon is destroyed, the counter is removed from the board. The Cannons can fire at any target in the same space or the space directly in front of the Cannon on the Outer Crater wall.

The Game Board

The game board is located on the inside cover of this comics module. Pieces from opposite sides may stay in the same space, but there is a limit of three pieces total allowed in any space.

There are secret bases built into the craters of the Tharsian plateau. Each Crater Fortress has two main areas: Inner Crater and Outer Crater. The spaces around the Outer Crater area represent the Fire Zones for the Fortresses' powerful Laser Cannon. A Laser Cannon may attack into the Outer Crater space in front of the space in which it is placed.

The Course of Play

A turn in "Craters of Tharsis" has three separate parts or phases. *These are the* ***Initiative***, ***Movement***, *and* ***Attack Phases***.

Initiative Phase: At the start of each turn, both players roll a die for initiative. Ties must re-roll. The player with the highest roll moves first. Each turn, each player completes the Movement and Attack Phases separately, i.e., player A moves and attacks, then player B does.

Movement Phase: The player moves any or all of his pieces during this part of the turn. If, during movement, a piece enters a space containing a Trap, the results are determined immediately. If a piece enters a space with (or the Outer Crater space adjacent to) a Laser Cannon, this attack is also resolved immediately.

Attack Phase: All of the player's pieces make attacks. If a piece is hit, remove it from the board.

Starting to Play

In order to simulate the use of the stealth technology, in both the battlesuits of the NEO Warriors and the Krait Fighters, the following occurs at the beginning of the game. The RAM player rolls one six-sided die and adds 1. This is the number of turns the NEO forces go undetected. It is referred to as the Stealth Period. (If you are using the chits for the die, a six sided die is simulated using just the chits marked 1 through 6.)

The only time the RAM player can fire on the NEO forces during the Stealth Period is when they enter a space that contains a RAM unit. At the end of that time, the RAM forces have been alerted to the invasion, and can bring their full force to bear.

Movement

Pieces move from place to place by moving into adjacent spaces. To enter an enemy-occupied space, a piece must first destroy the enemy piece occupying the space.

An exception to this is hand-to-hand combat. In this case, a troop unit (a Terrine, or a NEO Warrior) can move into the same space as an enemy troop unit to engage in combat. Troops and Battlecarriers can also enter the same space as a Laser Cannon. They must stop to resolve the attack against them, but if they survive, they may continue on. The only other exception to this rule is Leapfrogging, as explained below.

Each piece has a maximum number of spaces it can move in a turn. They are as follows:

Unit	Move
Warriors	1
Terrines	1
Battlecruisers	2
Cruisers	3
Fighters	4

Keep in mind that the RAM Krait fighters are not actually usable by the RAM player. RAM has no pilots currently on station, and the fighters exist solely as targets of the NEO attack.

Leapfrogging: Troops can move through spaces occupied by friendly troops. They cannot pass through spaces occupied by friendly units other than troops, nor can they leapfrog enemy units. Battlecarriers cannot pass through occupied spaces of any sort, nor can any unit (other than a flying one) pass through a space occupied by a Battlecarrier. A troop or a Battlecarrier can also enter the same space as a Laser Cannon, but must stop for the resolution of a Laser attack against it.

Cruisers and fighters can leapfrog all units, both friendly and enemy, because they are considered to be flying overhead. They do still count towards the three unit per space limit.

Passing Over Traps: Ground units which encounter a Trap during their movement must stop on the space occupied by the Trap. Air units pass freely over Traps, because they are in the air, and Traps do not effect them.

Carrying Troops: Both Battlecarriers and Cruisers can carry troops from place to place, using their superior movement ability. A Cruiser can carry two troops, a Battlecarrier three. Loading and unloading can be done at the start or the end of a transporting piece's Movement Phase; however, both actions cannot be done in the same turn. Loading is done by moving

the troops into the same space as the transporting piece, removing them from the board, and placing them in a convenient place. A troop can move to load into a transporting vehicle as its move, then be carried by that piece to a new place using the transporter's movement. However, that troop cannot unload until the NEXT turn. Troops inside a transporting piece cannot fire on any other piece. If the transporting piece is destroyed, all troops inside are considered destroyed.

Ranges

In this game, pieces cannot attack other pieces unless they are in the same or adjacent spaces.

Attacks

With the exception of bombing & Laser Cannons, each piece in combat makes one attack per turn. To make an attack, the player announces which of his pieces are attacking, and which of his opponent's pieces are being attacked. A player can attack any enemy piece adjacent to his.

The player checks the Combat Results Table for his Hit number. This is done by finding the type of piece that is attacking (the Attacker) on the left side of the table and the type of piece that is being attacked (the Target) along the top of the table. The number, where the attacker's row and the target's column meet, is the Hit number.

Roll one ten-sided die. If the number rolled is equal to or higher than your Hit number, the target is hit and destroyed. Destroyed pieces are removed from the board. If the number rolled is less than the Hit number, the attack misses and has no effect.

If both players still have pieces adjacent to each other after combat is over, they can elect to attack in the next turn or move away from each other. This is where the Initiative Phase becomes important, because it allows the winner to choose to escape an attack, or pursue an escaping piece.

Combat Results Table

	DEFENDER				
Attacker	Warrior	Terrine	Fighter	Cruiser	B. Carrier
Warrior	•	5	6	8	8
Terrine	6	•	6	8	8
Fighter	7	7	6	8	8
Cruiser	5	5	5	6	7
B. Carrier	5	5	5	6	7

Special Attacks

Bombing is an attack used only by Cruisers. Any piece passed over by a Cruiser can be bombed. A Cruiser can bomb up to three pieces that it passes over during its move.

Target Bombed	Hit #
Troopers & Terrines	6
Battlecarriers	8
Guns	6
Traps	No
Fighters or Cruisers	No

Bombing can be simplified by tipping over each piece that is being bombed during the movement phase, then resolving those attacks in the attack phase. This helps to reduce confusion when a number of bombing attacks are made.

Traps

Traps affect ground units (Terrines, Warriors, & Battlecarriers). A trap is activated whenever an enemy ground piece passes through the space the trap is in. The piece must stop on the Trap and resolve the Trap attack. To avoid a Trap, the piece must roll greater than the value on the Trap's hidden side. If the piece fails its Trap roll, it is destroyed and removed from play immediately. A successful roll against a trap removes it from the board. Traps cannot be moved once placed.

Laser Cannon Attacks

Like Traps, Laser Cannons can attack immediately when an enemy piece enters its space. However, for the Laser Cannons to fire, there must be a Terrine present in the Inner Crater to operate them. Each Laser Cannon can make one attack on each enemy piece in the space. Pieces moving

through spaces with Laser Cannons must stop and resolve these attacks before continuing their movement. Laser Cannon Hit numbers are listed in the Combat Results Table.

Hand-to-Hand Combat

This is a special attack in which a Troop unit enters the same space as another Troop unit during the Movement Phase. Battlecarriers, Fighters, & Cruisers may not engage in any form of Hand-to-Hand combat. The combat is resolved using the same Combat Results Table as above.

Terrines are especially good at hand-to-hand combat, being bred specifically for it. They receive an additional +1 to all Attack rolls made while in Hand-to-Hand, whereas Warriors receive no bonus.

If a troop unit misses its attack, it can remain in the same space as the defending piece as long as it continues to make hand-to-hand attacks.

Special Rules

Stealing Fighters From Craters: To steal a fighter, a NEO Warrior unit must enter the Inner Crater area and move into a space containing a fighter. On the movement turn following, he may elect to:

1) Remove the fighter and the Warrior piece from the board for victory points. Fighters removed from the board cannot return.

2) Fly the fighter out of the Crater and use it in combat. Once used for this purpose, it cannot be used towards victory points.

NEO Warriors may be attacked while in the process of stealing a fighter. A Warrior under attack must resolve this attack first, then move its fighter on its next Movement Phase.

Winning the Game

The NEO player's objective is to capture as many of the Krait fighters from RAM as possible. The RAM player's objective is to hold onto the fighters and destroy as much NEO hardware as possible. The game ends when either all NEO troops have been destroyed, or all Krait fighters have been removed from the map. At game end, both sides count up their Victory points. The player with the most Points wins. Victory Points are earned for each unit destroyed, as follows:

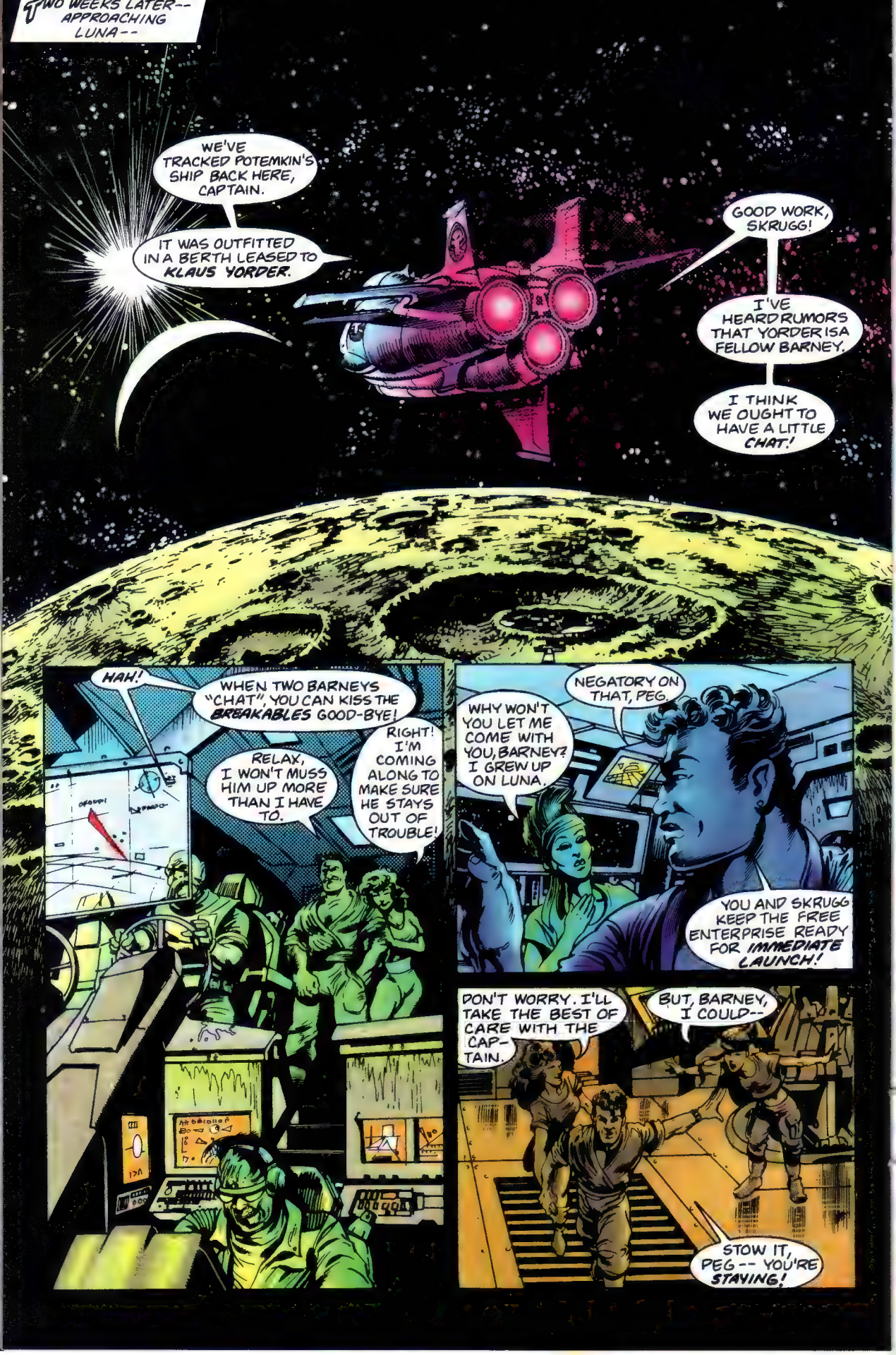
Victory Point Values

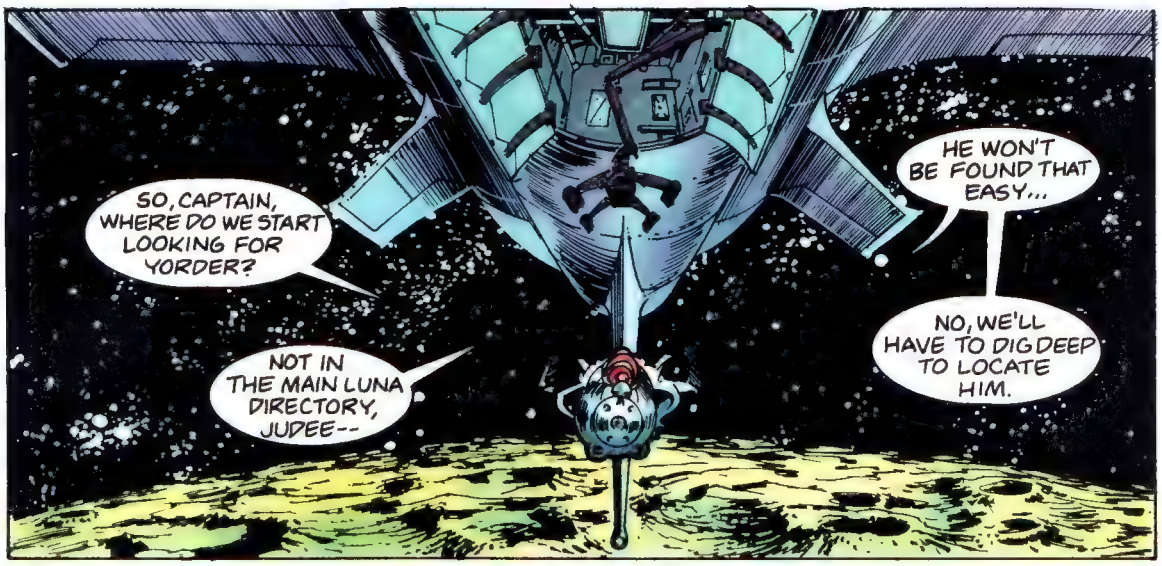
Type	Hit #
Terrine	1
Battlecarrier	3
Cruiser	3
Krait Fighter (Stolen by NEO)	3
(Destroyed by RAM)	1
RAM Fighter	2

Good Luck!

Credits
Design — Mike Pondsmith and Paul Lidberg
Gameboard and Art — Philippe Grabowski

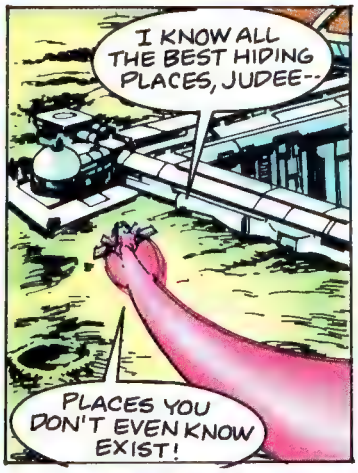
BLACK BARNEY
HIS SEARCH FOR THE MEANING OF LIFE AND HAPPINESS
CHAPTER TWO
STATESMAN, SCHOLAR, POET, PATRIOT, ALTRUIST...
NONE OF THESE WORDS APPLY TO BLACK BARNEY, TERROR OF THE SPACEWAYS, A GENETICALLY AUGMENTED CYBORG WITH A MARKED PROPENSITY FOR INTENSE PHYSICAL ACTION (i.e., MINDLESS VIOLENCE).
HIRED BY THE BRIGANDS LEAGUE TO FREE COMRADES HELD PRISONER BY RAM, BARNEY'S SUCCESSFUL RAID WAS INTERRUPTED BY THE SUDDEN ARRIVAL OF POTEMKIN.
POTEMKIN--A FELLOW "BARNEY"--SUFFERED FROM A HORRIBLE DISEASE THAT SUDDENLY TURNED EVERY CELL IN HIS BODY CANCEROUS!
BEFORE DYING, POTEMKIN WARNED BLACK BARNEY THAT ALL THE BARNEYS WERE DOOMED TO PERISH IN THE SAME MANNER!
WRITTEN BY BUZZ DIXON
PENCILS BY KEVIN ALTIERI
INKS BY TOM MANDRAKE
COLORS BY LIZ BERUBE
LETTERED BY TERESA DAVIDSON
CREATIVE DIRECTOR · FLINT DILLE

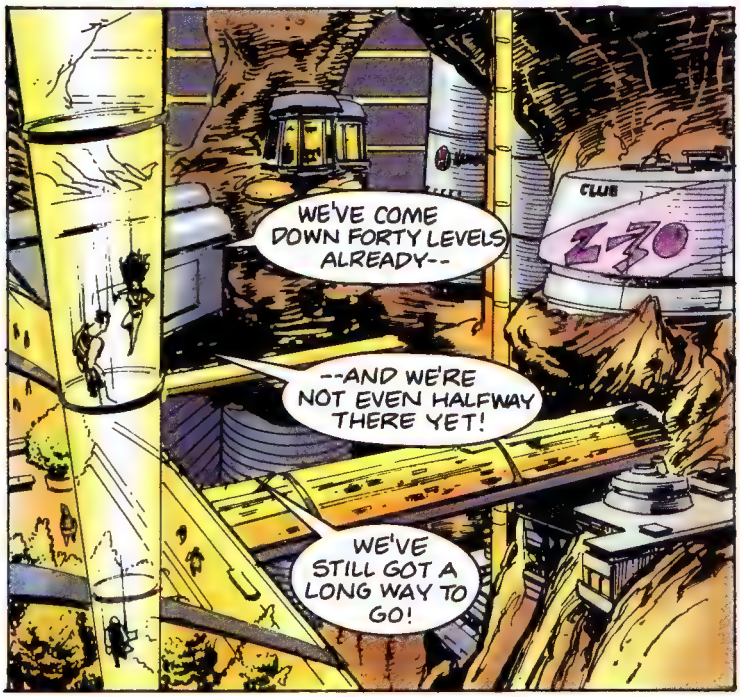

TWO WEEKS LATER-- APPROACHING LUNA--
WE'VE TRACKED POTEMKIN'S SHIP BACK HERE, CAPTAIN.
IT WAS OUTFITTED IN A BERTH LEASED TO KLAUS YORDER.
GOOD WORK, SKRUGG!
I'VE HEARD RUMORS THAT YORDER IS A FELLOW BARNEY.
I THINK WE OUGHT TO HAVE A LITTLE CHAT!
HAH!
WHEN TWO BARNEYS "CHAT", YOU CAN KISS THE BREAKABLES GOOD-BYE!
RELAX, I WON'T MUSS HIM UP MORE THAN I HAVE TO.
RIGHT! I'M COMING ALONG TO MAKE SURE HE STAYS OUT OF TROUBLE!
NEGATORY ON THAT, PEG.
WHY WON'T YOU LET ME COME WITH YOU, BARNEY? I GREW UP ON LUNA.
YOU AND SKRUGG KEEP THE FREE ENTERPRISE READY FOR IMMEDIATE LAUNCH!
DON'T WORRY. I'LL TAKE THE BEST OF CARE WITH THE CAP-TAIN.
BUT, BARNEY, I COULD--
STOW IT, PEG -- YOU'RE STAYING!


SO, CAPTAIN, WHERE DO WE START LOOKING FOR YORDER?
NOT IN THE MAIN LUNA DIRECTORY, JUDEE--
HE WON'T BE FOUND THAT EASY...
NO, WE'LL HAVE TO DIG DEEP TO LOCATE HIM.

ON LUNA, THAT COULD BE PRETTY DEEP.

IF YOU CATCH MY DRIFT...
OH, YASS...


I KNOW ALL THE BEST HIDING PLACES, JUDEE--
PLACES YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW EXIST!


WE'VE COME DOWN FORTY LEVELS ALREADY--
--AND WE'RE NOT EVEN HALFWAY THERE YET!
WE'VE STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO!
CLUB
Z-70

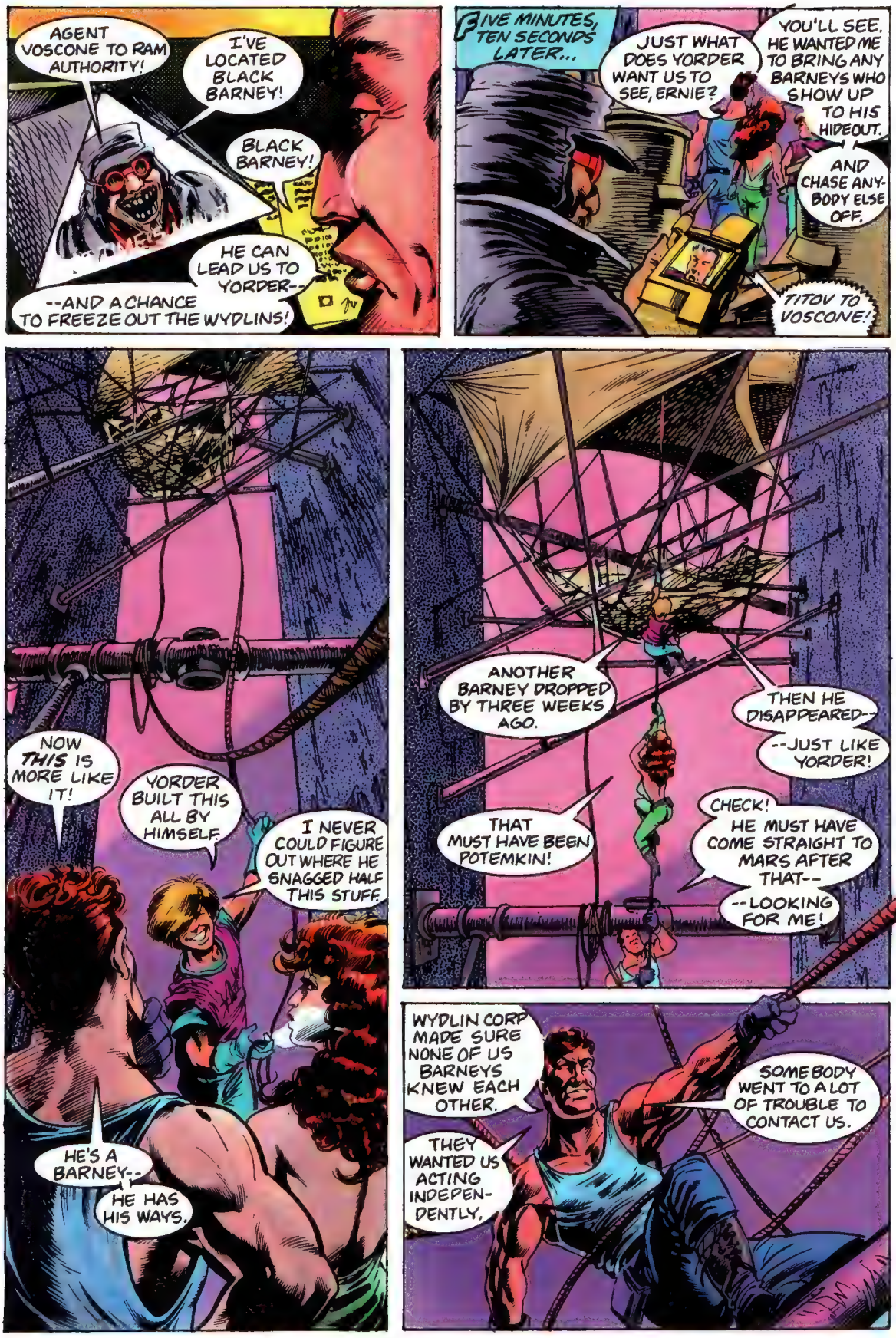
FINALLY, THEY REACH THE LOWEST LEVEL OF LUNA'S WARRENS...
A10
TOOKIE BOOTH
FON
LOCOMAN
UGH!
WHO WOULD WANT TO LIVE HERE?
NO ONE!
AND THAT'S WHY IT'S THE MOST LOGICAL PLACE TO START LOOKING FOR YORDER!
VIRGIN
50
100
500
DDM.
TOHO
DUBIOUS VIRGIN
THIS SOUNDS LESS LIKE A SEARCH--
--AND MORE LIKE AN EXCUSE TO GO BARHOPPING!
DUBIOUS VIRGIN
TRUST ME, THIS IS PURELY SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.
AGENT VOSCONE TO RAM AUTHORITY.
I'VE LOCATED BLACK BARNEY!
BEEOOP!
HEY, BIG GIRL!
WHADDYA SAY TO A LITTLE GOOEY-LOOEY?
I SAY, "SCRAM, LITTLE GOOEY LOUIE."
KNOW WHERE I CAN FIND KLAUS YORDER?
MAYBE, MAYBE NOT--
BUT I SURE AIN'T TELLING THE LIKES OF YOU!
AW, THAT BREAKS MY HEART...

FWAP
AND WHEN MY HEART BREAKS--
--I BREAK FACES!
WHERE'S YORDER?
MMPH! MMBLE MMPH MMBLE!
HE CAN TALK A LOT CLEARER--
--IF YOU GET YOUR HAND OFF HIS MOUTH.
DID I HEAR A MOUSE BURP?
UH-OH--IT'S A LUNAR YOUTH PACK!
CLIK
MMPH! MMPH MMBLE!
YOU MAY BE BIG--
--BUT NOT TOO BIG FOR A BLASTER!
IF YOU'RE REAL POLITE, I'LL LET YOU BEG FOR YOUR LIFE!
BARNEY... I WOULDN'T ANTAGONIZE HIM...
RELAX. EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL.
MMPH! MMBLE MMBLE MMPH!

HEEEYAAAAA
WHAMM
POW!
GOONCH
KRAK

I FORGOT.
YOU'RE A GENETICALLY AUGMENTED CYBORG.
YOU LIVE FOR THIS STUFF!
HEH HEH
DAMN STRAIGHT.
WELL, WE SEEM TO HAVE WORN OUT OUR WELCOME HERE.
I KNOW ANOTHER BAR WHERE WE CAN ASK FOR YORDER.
KOFF! WAIT!
YOU'RE A BARNEY, RIGHT?
I'M THE BARNEY, KID!
YORDER SAID MORE BARNEYS MIGHT COME.
?!?
I HAVE SOMETHING HE WANTS YOU TO SEE!
MEANWHILE, A SCANT FIVE LIGHTMINUTES AWAY ON MARS--
--A RAM BUSINESS MEETING TAKES AN UGLY TURN!
DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS OPERATION HAS COST US?
--AND NOW WE'VE LOST TRACK OF BLACK BARNEY!
A PRISON FRANCHISE DESTROYED--
--FIFTEEN EMPLOYEES DEAD--
--NINETY-THREE INJURED--
--TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVEN RENEGADES TURNED LOOSE.

THE COST WILL BE WELL WORTH IT--
--ONCE WE GET THE BARNEYS UNDER OUR CONTROL!
IT BETTER BE!
CONSIDER THIS INTEREST, MR. TITOV--
COMPOUNDED DAILY FROM THE DAY RAM'S HOSTILE TAKEOVER OF WYDLIN CORP LEFT OUR FAMILY VIRTUALLY IMPOVERISHED!
YOU'VE PAID RAM BACK MANY TIMES OVER!
YOUR BARNEYS' REIGN OF TERROR--
--EXTENDS FROM MERCURY TO THE ASTEROID BELT!
AND PERHAPS BEYOND!
YES, BUT THEY WILL ALL EASILY FALL INTO LINE ONCE WE LOCATE--
DUTTER!!
MUSN'T BORE MR. TITOV WITH TRIVIALITIES, DEAR BROTHER.
I'M SURE HE HAS A WHOLE SOLAR SYSTEM TO RUN.
TA-TA, MR. TITOV.
GOODBYE!
AND THANK YOU, DUTTER WYDLIN, FOR BEING A POMPOUS, ARROGANT, OVERBLOWN FOOL--
WOOOSH
--AND REVEALING YOU DON'T HAVE THE LAST KEY ELEMENT TO OUR DILEMMA!
NOW ALL THAT REMAINS--
--IS DEVISING A WAY TO EXTRACT VERUSCHKA AND DUTTER WYDLIN FROM THE EQUATION--
-- AND LEAVE THE SUM TOTAL FOR RAM!
MEGA


AGENT VOSCONE TO RAM AUTHORITY!
I'VE LOCATED BLACK BARNEY!
BLACK BARNEY!
HE CAN LEAD US TO YORDER--
--AND A CHANCE TO FREEZE OUT THE WYDLINS!
FIVE MINUTES, TEN SECONDS LATER...
JUST WHAT DOES YORDER WANT US TO SEE, ERNIE?
YOU'LL SEE. HE WANTED ME TO BRING ANY BARNEYS WHO SHOW UP TO HIS HIDEOUT.
AND CHASE ANY-BODY ELSE OFF.
TITOV TO VOSCONE!
NOW THIS IS MORE LIKE IT!
YORDER BUILT THIS ALL BY HIMSELF.
I NEVER COULD FIGURE OUT WHERE HE SNAGGED HALF THIS STUFF.
HE'S A BARNEY--
HE HAS HIS WAYS.
ANOTHER BARNEY DROPPED BY THREE WEEKS AGO.
THEN HE DISAPPEARED--
--JUST LIKE YORDER!
THAT MUST HAVE BEEN POTEMKIN!
CHECK! HE MUST HAVE COME STRAIGHT TO MARS AFTER THAT--
--LOOKING FOR ME!
WYDLIN CORP MADE SURE NONE OF US BARNEYS KNEW EACH OTHER.
SOME BODY WENT TO A LOT OF TROUBLE TO CONTACT US.
THEY WANTED US ACTING INDEPEN-DENTLY.

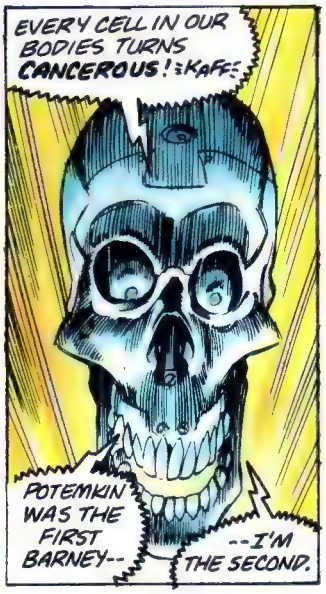
LOOKS LIKE YORDER WAS A SOLO OPERATOR.
WE ALL CAN'T BE SPACE PIRATE CAPTAINS.
YORDER WAS MY ONLY ADULT FRIEND.
HE SAID I COULD TRUST ANY BARNEYS WHO SHOWED UP.
OL' PITCH
VINTAGE
DEATH'S HEAD VII

I'M THE SEVENTH IN THE SERIES, KID--
WHAT'S THIS THING?
LISTEN UP REAL GOOD.
I DON'T THINK YOU HAVE AN AWFUL LOT OF TIME LEFT. MAYBE A FEW MONTHS. WATCH THIS...

GREETINGS TO WHICHEVER BARNEY YOU ARE! BY THE TIME YOU FIND THIS I'LL PROBABLY BE DEAD--
--AND YOU WILL BE ONE DAY CLOSER TO YOUR OWN DEATH!
CHEERY CUSS, AIN'T HE?

JUST BEFORE THEY FELL TO RAM'S HOSTILE TAKEOVER, WYDLIN CORP CREATED US BARNEYS AS A LAST ACT OF REVENGE AGAINST RAM.
THEY TURNED US LOOSE WITH THE COMPULSION TO CAUSE GRIEF TO RAM--
--BUT THEY DIDN'T SURRENDER ALL CONTROL OVER US--

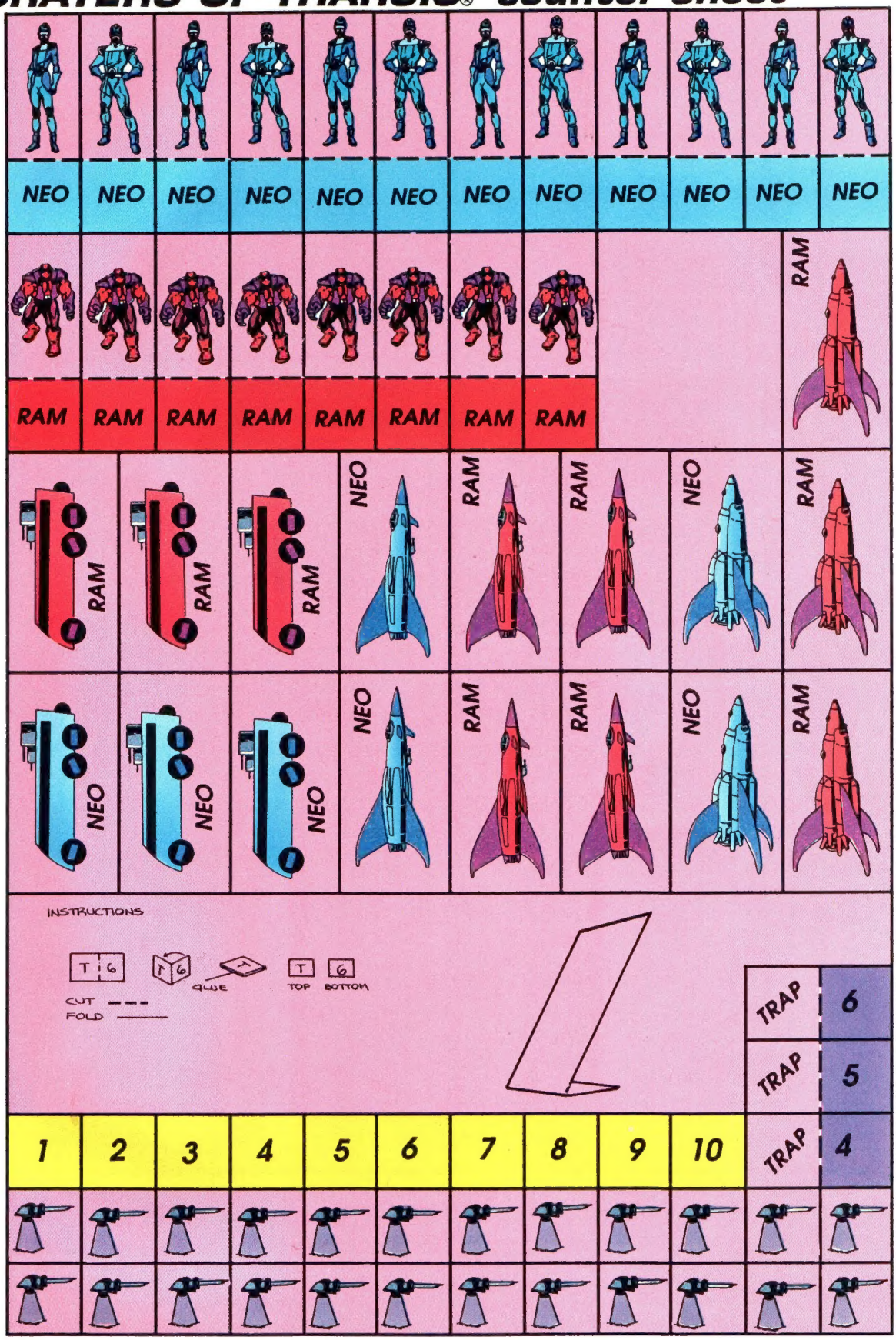
I DISCOVERED THAT BEFORE TURNING US LOOSE --
-- WYDLIN IMPLANTED A GENETIC TIME BOMB IN EACH OF US!
=GASP=
EXACTLY TWENTY YEARS AFTER WE GAIN CONSCIOUSNESS--


EVERY CELL IN OUR BODIES TURNS CANCEROUS! =KaFe=
POTEMKIN WAS THE FIRST BARNEY--
--I'M THE SECOND.

OUR ONLY HOPE TO STOP THE GENETIC BOMB IS TO =WHEEZ= FIND WYDLIN'S ORIGINAL LAB AND--
SKREEEEEEE!
YOW!
POW
=GURK!=
SOMEBODY'S BELOW US!
AND I'M BETTING IT'S RAM!
...YORDER...
...YORDER SAID GO...
...GO TO...
...MERCURY... =UNH!=
FLOP
ALL UNITS-- ALERT!
SET UP TYPE THREE AMBUSH PATTERN!
NOBODY ESCAPES!
TO BE CONTINUED?
NOT IF THESE GUYS CAN HELP IT!

IN THE 25TH. CENTURY
OUR GRAVITY WAS ABOUT THE SAME AS IF WE HAD BELTS ON OUR JUMPING GOOD. WE GOOD AT THE STRANGE CRAFT
BUT WHAT ARE WE GOING TO FIND ON THAT SHIP?

CRATERS OF THARSIS® counter sheet



Trash This Book.

We've been getting complaints about our Comics Modules.

The complaints center around the fact that we - GASP - ask you to tear up the books to pull out the game components. "The collectors will hate that. They like to keep their books 'pristine'." Right.

Well, these books aren't for collectors. They're *meant* to be mauled. Our goal is to see our books returned to their natural state: shredded pulp. Getting cut up by readers is just the beginning of a process we hope is repeating itself around the world.

We want our books to be read until the covers fall off, sliced apart for game materials, used to hold up beds, jammed into drawers — and finally, returned to nature by either mom or the wife. Just call it our little contribution to ecology.

So, this much we pledge: we'll keep printing 'em, you keep trashing 'em; and everybody will be happy.

❐

That's all for this month. As this is being written, we're heading to COMICON in San Diego. As COMICON will be over by the time you read this — I hope we saw you there!

Until next month — FLINT

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